

I am genuinely outraged at Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to air a hateful one-sided "documentary" pre-empting prime time network programming days before the election in a clear attempt to sway the outcome. Their actions are particularly hypocritical given their decision earlier this year to block the airing of a regularly scheduled Nightline show because they deemed it too political.

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard.

The FCC needs to make it clear that attempts by corporations like Sinclair to alter the political process by using the airwaves owned by all of us will be punished by the retraction of broadcast licenses. What is going to happen in this country when half of the electorate feels so desperate about our government's inaction that they feel they have no recourse? I fear that day is close at hand, and I hope the commission does the right thing by sending a clear message that actions like those by Sinclair won't be tolerated. Thank you.